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## Government invests SEK 600 million to combat intimate partner and honour-based violence

Published 07 February 2024

Preventing and combating men's violence against women and honour-based violence and oppression is a highly prioritised issue in action for gender equality. Through its gender equality policy, the Government is investing over SEK 600 million in this area in 2024. The appropriation directions given to several government agencies have given them important mandates to strengthen these efforts, which require long-term sustainability and persistence.

### Honour-based violence and oppression

Efforts to combat honour-based violence and oppression are under way on a broad front. Penalties for honour-based oppression must be made tougher, support to victims of violence must be improved and government agencies' efforts must be more effective. Some of the Government's initiatives involve introducing a national function that people in vulnerable situations and those close to them can turn to, systematic follow-up of social services' initiatives for individuals subjected to violence and better support to combat honour-based violence regarding kinship placements of children and young people. Continued development of expertise on children's and young people's harmful stays abroad, as well as enhanced systematic efforts to combat honour-based violence and oppression in schools, are also important components of this work.

### Children's and young people's vulnerability to violence

The Government is making investments in several areas to strengthen protection of, and support to, children and young people who are subjected to violence. These involve violence prevention initiatives in schools: analysing schools' efforts to prevent and address violence in young people's relationships and honour-based violence and oppression, and proposing a structure for coordinating this work. Other tasks involve strengthening the judicial system's expertise on children's vulnerability to violence, measures to prevent children's harmful stays abroad and producing knowledge to prevent young LGBTIQ people from being sexually exploited – both online and physically.

### Investments in safe houses and more coordinated support to victims of violence

The Government is strengthening its efforts to improve the quality of women's shelters and safe houses for victims of violence. Activities at such facilities will be followed up, with a particular focus on the needs of children, people with disabilities and those subjected to violence in an honour context. Support to people subjected to violence will also be reviewed, since someone who has been subjected to violence often needs to be in contact with several different government agencies to receive support and assistance. The Government considers that people subjected to violence should be offered coordinated support in contact with government agencies and other practical assistance, and therefore wants a review conducted of whether measures need to be taken to provide better support than at present, such as by means of a specially appointed contact person.

### Economic gender equality

In the sphere of economic gender equality, the economic conditions particularly for young women and men to establish themselves in the housing market will be analysed from a gender equality perspective. How access to rental accommodation affects women and men, including opportunities to move for work and for people subjected to violence to leave a violent relationship, will also be examined. The question of whether increased remote work following the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect gender equality between women and men in the labour market will be analysed. Important ongoing assignments in this area relate to continued investments in foreign-born women's establishment in the labour market.

## Several assignments to the Swedish Gender Equality Agency

In 2024, the Swedish Gender Equality Agency has received around SEK 90 million to pursue and coordinate several assignments that primarily encompass efforts to combat men's violence against women and honour-based violence and oppression.

The Agency's assignments include the following:

- spreading knowledge about honour-based oppression connected to harmful stays abroad, so as to strengthen work with children and young people who are abducted to other countries;
- surveying and analysing the prevalence of honour-based violence and oppression – including child marriage, forced marriages and polygamy in Sweden – and compiling evidence-based methods and strategies for prevention, risk management, protection and support;
- implementing capacity building measures to combat violence in matters concerning custody, living arrangements and contact;
- strengthening efforts to combat sexual exploitation of children, prostitution and human trafficking;
- coordinating and following up efforts to prevent and combat female genital mutilation – an area in which several government agencies have assignments;
- analysing the housing market from a gender equality perspective; and
- continuing to support government agencies, county administrative boards and higher education institutions in their gender mainstreaming efforts.

## New action plan

The Government is currently working intensively to produce a new action plan to counter and combat men's violence against women and honour-based violence and oppression, which will run in 2024–2026.

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